

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

Melissa Ray,

Plaintiff,

V.

Southwest Recovery Services, Inc.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No.: _____

COMPLAINT

JURY

For this Complaint, the Plaintiff, Melissa Ray, by undersigned counsel, states as follows:

JURISDICTION

1. This action arises out of the Defendants’ repeated violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq. (“FDCPA”), and the invasion of the Plaintiff’s personal privacy by the Defendant and its agents in their illegal efforts to collect a consumer debt.

2. Supplemental jurisdiction exists pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367.

3. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b), in that the Defendants transact business in this District and a substantial portion of the acts giving rise to this action occurred in this District.

PARTIES

4. The Plaintiff, Melissa Ray (“Plaintiff”), is an adult individual residing in Houston, Texas, and is a “consumer” as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

5. The Defendant, Southwest Recovery Services, Inc. (“Southwest”), is a Texas business entity with an address of 2591 North Dallas Parkway, Suite 300, Frisco, Texas 75034, operating as a collection agency, and is a “debt collector” as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

ALLEGATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL COUNTS

A. The Debt

6. The Plaintiff allegedly incurred a financial obligation (the “Debt”) to a creditor (the “Creditor”).

7. The Debt arose from services provided by the Creditor which were primarily for family, personal or household purposes and which meets the definition of a “debt” under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

8. The Debt was purchased, assigned or transferred to Southwest for collection, or Southwest was employed by the Creditor to collect the Debt.

9. The Defendants attempted to collect the Debt and, as such, engaged in “communications” as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

B. Southwest Engages in Harassment and Abusive Tactics

10. Defendants called Plaintiff in an attempt to collect the Debt with the intent to annoy and harass.

11. Plaintiff informed Defendants that she disputed the Debt. Defendants stated they would consider it as a refusal to pay the Debt.

12. When Plaintiff tried to verbally dispute the debt, Defendants would hang up on her and call her right back.

13. Defendants threatened to ruin Plaintiff's credit rating if she did not pay the Debt.

14. Defendants told Plaintiff that "this [was her] credit and it [was] going to be destroyed".

15. Defendants were rude and abusive when speaking to Plaintiff. Defendants told Plaintiff that she was dishonest because she refused to pay the debt.

16. Defendants yelled at Plaintiff during the telephone calls.

17. Defendants failed to inform Plaintiff of her rights under the state and federal laws by written correspondence within 5 days after the initial communication, including the right to dispute the Debt.

18. Defendants refused to provide their address to Plaintiff, preventing her from disputing the debt in writing.

C. Plaintiff Suffered Actual Damages

19. The Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer actual damages as a result of the Defendants' unlawful conduct.

20. As a direct consequence of the Defendants' acts, practices and conduct, the Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer from anger, anxiety, emotional distress, fear and frustration.

21. The Defendants' conduct was so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.

COUNT I
VIOLATIONS OF THE FDCPA 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq.

22. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

23. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d(5) in that Defendants caused a phone to ring repeatedly and engaged the Plaintiff in telephone conversations, with the intent to annoy and harass.

24. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(8) in that Defendants threatened to communicate false credit information.

25. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(10) in that Defendants employed false and deceptive means to collect a debt.

26. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1) in that Defendants failed to send the Plaintiff a validation notice stating the amount of the Debt.

27. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(2) in that Defendants failed to send the Plaintiff a validation notice stating the name of the original creditor to whom the Debt was owed.

28. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(3) in that Defendants failed to send the Plaintiff a validation notice stating the Plaintiff's right to dispute the Debt within thirty days.

29. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(4) in that Defendants failed to send the Plaintiff a validation notice informing the Plaintiff of a right to have verification and judgment mailed to the Plaintiff.

30. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(5) in that Defendants failed to send the Plaintiff a validation notice containing the name and address of the original creditor.

31. The foregoing acts and omissions of the Defendants constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA, including every one of the above-cited provisions.

32. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages as a result of Defendant's violations.

COUNT II
VIOLATIONS OF THE TEXAS DEBT COLLECTION ACT
TEX. FIN. CODE ANN. § 392, et al.

33. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

34. The Plaintiff is a "consumer" as defined by Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.001(1).

35. The Defendants are each a "debt collector" and a "third party debt collector" as defined by Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.001(6) and (7).

36. The Defendants caused a telephone to ring repeatedly, with the intent to annoy or abuse the Plaintiff, in violation of Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.302(4).

37. The Plaintiff is entitled to injunctive relief and actual damages pursuant to Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.403(a)(1) and (2) and to remedies under Tex. Bus. & Comm. Code § 17.62 pursuant to Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.404(a).

COUNT III
INVASION OF PRIVACY BY INTRUSION INTO PRIVATE AFFAIRS

38. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

39. The Restatement of Torts, Second, § 652(b) defines intrusion upon seclusion as, “One who intentionally intrudes...upon the solitude or seclusion of another, or his private affairs or concerns, is subject to liability to the other for invasion of privacy, if the intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person.”

40. Texas further recognizes the Plaintiff’s right to be free from invasions of privacy, thus the Defendants violated Texas state law.

41. The Defendants intentionally intruded upon the Plaintiff’s right to privacy by continually harassing the Plaintiff with numerous calls to Plaintiff.

42. The telephone calls made by the Defendants to the Plaintiff were so persistent and repeated with such frequency as to be considered, “hounding the plaintiff,” and, “a substantial burden to her existence,” thus satisfying the Restatement of Torts, Second, § 652(b) requirement for an invasion of privacy.

43. The conduct of the Defendants in engaging in the illegal collection activities resulted in multiple invasions of privacy in such a way as would be considered highly offensive to a reasonable person.

44. As a result of the intrusions and invasions, the Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages in an amount to be determined at trial from the Defendants.

45. All acts of the Defendants and its agents were committed with malice, intent, wantonness, and recklessness, and as such, the Defendants are subject to punitive damages.

COUNT IV
INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

46. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully set forth herein at length.

47. The acts, practices and conduct engaged in by the Defendants *vis-à-vis* the Plaintiff was so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.

48. The foregoing conduct constitutes the tort of intentional infliction of emotional distress under the laws of the State of Texas.

49. All acts of the Defendants and the Collectors complained of herein were committed with malice, intent, wantonness, and recklessness, and as such, the Defendants are subject to imposition of punitive damages.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against the Defendants:

1. Actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1) against the Defendants;
2. Statutory damages of \$1,000.00 for each violation pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A) against the Defendants;
3. Costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) against the Defendants;
4. Injunctive relief pursuant to Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.403(a)(1);
5. Actual damages pursuant to Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.403(a)(2);
6. Remedies under Tex. Bus. & Comm. Code § 17.62 pursuant to Tex. Fin. Code Ann. § 392.404(a);
7. Actual damages from the Defendants for the all damages including emotional distress suffered as a result of the intentional, reckless, and/or

negligent FDCPA violations and intentional, reckless, and/or negligent
invasions of privacy in an amount to be determined at trial for the Plaintiff;

8. Punitive damages; and
9. Such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

TRIAL BY JURY DEMANDED ON ALL COUNTS

Dated: June 10, 2011

Respectfully submitted,
By: /s/ Diana P. Larson
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